

DNREC Makes \$1.2 Million in Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant Funding Available for Delaware Clean Water Projects

The Junction and Breakwater Trail Bridge over the Munchy Branch in Sussex County. Photo by Robert Bayles

Delaware residents, along with government agencies, New Castle, Kent and Sussex conservation districts, and non-profit organizations throughout the state, can help support Delaware's continuing quest for clean water by taking advantage of an annual grant opportunity administered by the [Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control](#) and funded through the federal Clean Water Act. More than \$1.233 million in Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source grant funding for Delaware was recently announced by the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#).

DNREC is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants for Section 319 grant projects that reduce Delaware's nonpoint source (NPS) pollution and improve water quality by reducing nutrients that drain or leach into impaired Delaware waters. NPS pollution is caused by precipitation moving as overland runoff and through the ground. As runoff moves, pollutants are picked up and carried along with it, and eventually deposited into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and groundwater.

DNREC will accept Section 319 Nonpoint Source grant proposals from Monday, Dec. 6, 2021 until Feb. 9, 2022.

While eligible Section 319 projects may focus on reducing any source of NPS pollution, grant applications most frequently

involve agriculture, reforestation activities, stormwater retrofits, shoreline stabilization, and restoration-based Best Management Practices (BMPs). A predominant 319 grant focus is on watersheds with water quality impairments caused by polluted runoff, along with Delaware watersheds that have approved watershed implementation plans through U.S. EPA.

“While there has been vast improvement in Delaware’s water quality, challenges still persist, and meeting those challenges is crucial to our state’s achieving our goal of clean water for all Delawareans,” said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. “These Clean Water Act grants offer leverage for government agencies and nonprofit organizations who continue to make headway on the state’s clean water challenge. These grants help fund investments in cover crops, nutrient management, land conservation, stormwater retrofits, and tree planting projects – all of which enhance and improve water quality statewide.”

Past Delaware Section 319 grant recipients and their projects have included:

- The Kent and Sussex Conservation Districts for implementing agricultural BMPs including cover crops, nutrient management planning, water control structures, and structural BMPs to address manure storage and composting.
- The Delaware Botanic Gardens for urban-type BMPs such as living shorelines and stormwater facility enhancements to further water quality benefits.
- Delaware’s Center for the Inland Bays also used 319 grant funding for stormwater retrofits, reforestation projects, and living shorelines to help filter nonpoint source pollutants.
- The Delaware Wild Lands organization for implementing reforestation practices in the form of tree plantings on marginal cropland areas, enhancing both water quality and wildlife habitat benefits.

- The Sussex Conservation District in cooperation with the Delmarva Chicken Association for implementing various agricultural BMPs on poultry farm production areas, including tree plantings used as windbreaks, grass buffers, pollinator habitat areas, shallow water ponds for wildlife habitat and nutrient filtering capabilities.

All projects must include match funding from a non-federal source totaling at least 67% of the federal funding requested through the Section 319 Nonpoint Source grant proposal.

More information on applying for a Clean Water Act Section 319 grant, along with the application form and DNREC NPS program contact information, can be found on the DNREC website at de.gov/319grants.

About DNREC

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control protects and manages the state's natural resources, protects public health, provides outdoor recreational opportunities and educates Delawareans about the environment. The DNREC [Division of Watershed Stewardship](#) develops and implements innovative watershed assessment, monitoring and implementation activities. For more information, visit the [website](#) and connect with @DelawareDNREC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

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